Grants Commission (UGC) has sanctioned a Centre for African Studies in the University of Delhi.

(d) Under its Area Studies Programmes, UGC invites proposals from Universities for new Area Study Centres and Area Study Programmes, for consideration, as per relevant guidelines.

Projects for Assam

*290. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of projects being run by the Ministry in Assam;

(b) the details of the implementing authority and by when the projects are likely to be completed; and

(c) how many projects are in the pipeline for implementation in Assam alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) There are 159 ongoing individual projects under Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) in Assam including those sanctioned under special package for Bodo Territorial Council (BTC) and 59 ongoing projects through North Eastern Council (NEC)

(b) The details of these projects are given in the Annexure (See Appendix 208 Annexure No. 5).

(c) Forty-two projects have been retained under NLCPR for detailed techno-economic examination. Their details are as given in the Appendix. Six NEC projects are in the process of approval. Their details are as given in the Appendix.

Growth in Copper use

*291.SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been growth of 7 percent in the use of copper in India against world average of 4 percent but the per capita usage has not caught up with that of developed countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;

(c) what is the expected usage of copper during 2006-07 and 2007-08 as compared to previous year and its sources of availability;

(d) whether the country has surplus copper for exports; and

(e) if so, the details of exports projected for 2006-07 and 2007-08?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) and (b) There has been growth of about 6% in the usage of copper in India However, due to difference in consumption pattern per capita usage in India is less as compared to the usage in developed countries.

(c) The usage of copper during 2005-06 was 3,48,100 MT. The excepted usage of copper during 2006-07 and 2007-08 is estimated at 4,40,000 MT and 4,70,000 MT respectively. This demand can be met by domestic production.

(d) and (e) It is expected that about 3,50,000 MT and 4,00,000 MT of refined copper is likely to be available for export during 2006-07 and 2007-08 respectively.

Performance in Basic Sciences

*292. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's performance in basic sciences has come down in terms of percentage of contribution to world science and research;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by Government to develop science and technology;

(c) whether Government have planned to set up a separate parallel mechanism for scientific and higher educational institutions; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) While performance of India in basic sciences, as measured by research papers published in cited journals, has been slowly increasing in absolute terms over the past twenty five years (from 14983 in 1980 to 19448 in 2005) its share as percentage of world publications in the basic sciences has declined from 2.9% in 1980 to 1.9% in 2005 ever, in the last 10 years, it has increased from 1.5% to 1.9 %.